

Amendments to the Claims:

915 1. (Currently amended) A system for processing information associated with a package handled by a shipping service provider in connection with delivery of the package to an intended recipient, comprising:

a dispatch system for generating a dispatch order for pickup of the package from one of a plurality of locations in response to receipt of a customer-entered order for pickup and shipping of the package to the intended recipient;

an order-receiving system operative to receive a the customer-entered pickup and shipping order to ship a package from an Internet accessible computer system and communicate said customer-entered pickup and shipping order to a the dispatch system;

~~a dispatch system responsive to receipt of said customer-entered order for generating a dispatch order for pick up of the package; and~~

a communication system for communicating said dispatch order to a selected service person,

whereby the selected service person, in response to receipt of the dispatch order, ~~picks~~ is instructed to pick up the package at the location for delivery via the shipping service provider to the intended recipient.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a communications receiving device used by the selected service person for receiving the dispatch order.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a package information processing component associated with the order-receiving system for processing information entered by the customer via the Internet accessible computer system and validating the information prior to generating the dispatch order.

4. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the ~~order to ship a package is an on-call order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package at a place selected by the customer and deliver the package to the intended recipient~~ pickup location is selected by the customer.

5. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein ~~the order to ship a package is an order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package~~ the pickup location is at a drop box.

6. through 8. (Withdrawn)

9. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a package shipment status information system operative for receiving status information corresponding to the status of shipment of the package and for providing the status information for access by the customer.

10. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein the status information comprises tracking information corresponding to the package.

11. (Currently amended) A method for processing information associated with a package handled by a shipping service provider in connection with delivery of the package to an intended recipient, comprising:

receiving a customer-entered order ~~to ship a package~~ from an Internet accessible computer system, said customer-entered order requesting pick up and shipping of the package to the intended recipient, and communicating the customer-entered pickup and shipping order to a dispatch system;

at the dispatch system, generating a dispatch order for pick up of the package from one of a plurality of pickup locations; and

communicating the dispatch order to a selected service person,

whereby the selected service person, in response to receipt of the dispatch order, picks is instructed to pick up the package for delivery via the shipping service provider to the intended recipient.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of receiving the dispatch order with a communications receiving device used by the selected service person.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of processing information entered by the customer via the Internet accessible computer system and validating the information prior to generating the dispatch order.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~order to ship a package is an on call order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package at a place~~ pickup location is selected by the customer and deliver the package to the intended recipient.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~order to ship a package is an order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package~~ the pickup location is at a drop box.

16. through 18. (Withdrawn)

19. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of storing status information corresponding to the status of shipment of the package and providing the status information for access by the customer.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the status information comprises tracking information corresponding to the package.

21. (Currently amended) A system for pick up of a package by a shipping service provider for delivery of the package to an intended recipient, comprising:

an Internet accessible computer system for allowing a customer to enter an order to pick up the package and ship a ~~the~~ package to an intended recipient;

a dispatch system responsive to receipt of said customer-entered order for generating a dispatch order for pickup of the package from one of a plurality of locations;

an order-receiving system operative to receive a ~~the~~ customer-entered pickup and shipping order from said Internet accessible computer system and communicate said customer-entered pickup and shipping order to a ~~the~~ dispatch system;

~~a dispatch system responsive to receipt of said customer entered order for generating a dispatch order for acquisition of the package;~~

a communication system for communicating said dispatch order to a selected service person; and

a communications receiving device used by the selected service person for receiving the dispatch order,

whereby the selected service person, in response to receipt of the dispatch order, acquires is instructed to pick up the package at the location for delivery via the shipping service provider to the intended recipient.

22. (Currently amended) The system of claim 21, wherein the ~~order to ship a package is an on call order for the shipping service provider to acquire the package pickup location~~ location is at a place selected by the customer and deliver the package to the intended recipient.

23. (Currently amended) The system of claim 21, wherein the ~~order to ship a package is an order for the shipping service provider to acquire the package pickup location~~ is at a drop box.

24. (Currently amended) The system of claim 21, wherein the dispatch system comprises a dispatch center responsive to receipt of said customer-entered order for determining whether a ~~pickup point~~ the pickup location associated with said customer-entered order is within a predetermined service area for demand pickup by a ~~the~~ selected service person and, in response to a determination that the pickup ~~point~~ location is within the predetermined service area, generating the dispatch order for communication to the selected service person.

25. (Currently amended) The system of claim 24, wherein the dispatch system is operative for determining whether a ~~the pickup point~~ location associated with said customer-entered order is within a predetermined service area for demand pickup by a selected service person and, in response to a determination that the pickup ~~point~~ location is not within the

predetermined service area, providing information to the customer about locations for package drop-off.

26. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein dispatch system is operative for validating that pickup service is available for the order by reference to a zip code associated with the customer.

27. (Original) The system of claim 21, further comprising a delivery information acquisition device (DIAD) for scanning a label on the package to acquire information about the package.

28. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the communication system for communicating said dispatch order is selected from the group comprising: an e-mail message delivery system, a cellular telephone system, a pager system, a wireless personal communication system (PCS), an ARDIS network, Bluetooth devices, or other proprietary data communications system.

29. through 31. (Withdrawn)

32. (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~34~~21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to accept information from ~~the~~a label during scanning of the label at on call pickup or when processed at a drop box.

33. (Original) The system of claim 21, further comprising a package shipment status information system operative for receiving status information corresponding to the status of shipment of the package by the customer and for providing the status information for access by the customer.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein the status information system provides status information to the customer via the Internet accessible computer system.

35. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein the status information comprises the shipping history of a predetermined number of prior package shipments by the customer.

36. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein the status information comprises package tracking information.

37. (Original) The system of claim 21, further comprising a payment system associated with the order-receiving system for receiving payment information from the customer and processing a customer payment for shipment of the package.

38. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to provide a shipping information interface via an Internet site, the shipping information interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including shipment order information fields for customer entry of shipment order information associated with shipment of the package.

39. through 43. (Withdrawn)

44. (Currently amended) The system of claim 38, wherein the shipment order information fields include a "request package pickup" field that ~~can be~~ is capable of being selected by the customer to cause the order-receiving system to generate the customer-entered ~~on-call pickup~~ order, or deselect the request package pickup field, whereby a customer can select on call pickup or alternatively select to deliver the package to a drop box.

45. (Currently amended) The system of claim 38, wherein the shipment order information fields include a "ship to" address field that ~~can be~~ is capable of being filled in by the customer with information indicative of an address of the intended recipient.

46. (Withdrawn)

47. (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~46~~45, further comprising an address validation component operative for processing the ship to address field and determining

whether an address of a package recipient is a valid address, and further operative for providing an indication of address invalidity in the event that the address of the package recipient is invalid.

48. (Withdrawn)

49. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system comprises an Internet world wide web (WWW) server.

50. (Original) The system of claim 49, wherein the WWW server is operative for generating a web interface for interaction by the customer's Internet accessible computer system.

51. (Currently amended) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to provide a request package pickup interface via an Internet site, the request package pickup interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including package pickup information fields for customer entry of package pickup information associated with pickup and shipment of the package.

52. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to provide a shipment summary interface via the Internet site, the shipment summary interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including editable shipment summary information fields associated with an order to ship a package.

53. (Original) The system of claim 52, wherein the shipment summary interface is operative to display service options for selection by the customer selected from the group comprising: changing information associated with shipment of the package, adding another package to the shipment, selecting to view a drop-off locator, and selecting service for delivery of the package sooner.

54. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to provide a payment interface via the Internet site, the payment interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including selectable payment options associated with an order to ship a package.

55. (Withdrawn)

56. (Withdrawn)

57. (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~56~~⁵⁴, wherein the order-receiving system is operative, ~~in response to confirmation of the payment option,~~ to provide a print labels interface via the Internet site, the print labels interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including instructions for printing a label for association with the package.

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58. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to provide a shipping history interface via the Internet site, the shipping history interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including shipping history information fields for allowing customer selection of shipping history display options.

59. (Original) The system of claim 58, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to display shipping history information to the customer in response to selection of a shipping history display option.

60. (Original) The system of claim 58, wherein the shipping history display options include a track shipment option, and wherein the order-receiving system is operative to display shipment tracking information associated with a selected prior order by the customer in response to selection of the track shipment option.

61. (Withdrawn)

62. (Original) The system of claim 58, wherein the shipping history display options include a "shipment details" option, wherein the order-receiving system is operative to display information associated with at least one prior order by the customer, and wherein the order-receiving system is operative to display detailed information associated with a selected prior order of the customer in response to selection of the shipment details option in association with selection of a particular prior order.

63. (Withdrawn)

64. (Original) The system of claim 21, further comprising a customer profile information system associated with the order-receiving system, the customer profile information system storing preference information associated with the customer.

65. (Withdrawn)

66. (Currently amended) A method for delivery of a package by a shipping service provider to an intended recipient, comprising the steps of:

receiving an order entered by a customer at an Internet accessible computer system to pickup and ship a the package to an intended recipient;

communicating the pickup and shipping order to an order-receiving system;

at the order-receiving system, processing the pickup and shipping order to validate information associated with the order;

in response to validation of information associated with the pickup and shipping order, communicating the pickup and shipping order to a dispatch system;

at the dispatch system, generating a dispatch order for pick up of the package at one of a plurality of locations;

communicating the dispatch order to a selected service person;

receiving the dispatch order at a communications receiving device associated with the selected service person;

in response to receipt of the dispatch order, acquiring the package;

~~whereby the selected service person, in response to receipt of the dispatch order, picks~~
picking up the package at the location for delivery to the intended recipient.

67. (Currently amended) The method of claim 66, wherein the ~~order to ship a~~
~~package is an on call order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package at~~pickup
location is a place selected by the customer and ~~deliver the package to the intended recipient.~~

68. (Currently amended) The method of claim 66, wherein the ~~order to ship a~~
~~package is an order for the shipping service provider to pick up the package~~pickup location is
at a drop box.

ais 69. (Currently amended) The method of claim 66, further comprising the steps of:
determining whether a pickup ~~point~~location associated with the order is within a
predetermined service area for demand pickup by a selected service person and,
in response to a determination that the pickup ~~point~~location is within the
predetermined service area, generating the dispatch order for communication to the selected
service person.

70. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, further comprising the steps of:
determining whether a pickup ~~point~~location associated with the order is within a
predetermined service area for demand pickup by a selected service person, and
in response to a determination that the pickup ~~point~~location is not within the
predetermined service area, providing information to the customer via the Internet accessible
computer system about locations for package drop-off.

71. (Original) The method of claim 69, further comprising the step of validating
that pickup service is available for the order by reference to a zip code associated with the
customer.

72. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of acquiring information about the package by scanning a label on the package with a delivery information acquisition device (DIAD).

73. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the step of communicating the dispatch order is carried out by communicating a message via a technology selected from the group comprising: an e-mail message, a cellular telephone system, a pager system, a wireless personal communication system (PCS), an ARDIS network, Bluetooth devices, or other proprietary data communications system.

74. through 77. (Withdrawn)

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78. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the steps of:
receiving status information from a package delivery system corresponding to the status of shipment of the package by the customer, and
providing the status information to the customer.

79. (Original) The method of claim 78, wherein the status information is provided to the customer via the Internet accessible computer system.

80. (Original) The method of claim 78, wherein the status information comprises the shipping history of a predetermined number of prior package shipments by the customer.

81. (Original) The method of claim 78, wherein the status information comprises package tracking information.

82. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the steps of:
receiving payment information from the customer, and
processing a customer payment for shipment of the package.

83. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of:

providing a shipping information interface via an Internet site, the shipping information interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including shipment order information fields for customer entry of shipment order information associated with shipment of the package.

84. through 88. (Withdrawn)

89. (Currently amended) The method of claim 83, wherein the shipment order information fields include a "request package pickup" field that ~~can be~~ is capable of being selected by the customer to cause the order-receiving system to generate the customer-entered ~~on-call pickup and shipping~~ order, or deselect the request package pickup field,

whereby a customer can select on call pickup or alternatively select ~~to deliver~~ pickup ~~of the package to at~~ a drop box.

90. (Currently amended) The method of claim 83, wherein the shipment order information fields include a "ship to" address field that ~~can be~~ is capable of being filled in by the customer with information indicative of an address of the intended recipient.

91. (Withdrawn)

92. (Original) The method of claim 90, further comprising the steps of: processing the ship to address field to validate the ship to address, determining whether an address of a package recipient is a valid address, and providing an indication of address invalidity in the event that the address of the package recipient is invalid.

93. (Withdrawn)

94. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the order-receiving system comprises an Internet world wide web (WWW) server.

95. (Original) The method of claim 94, wherein the VJWW server is operative for generating a web interface for interaction by the customer's Internet accessible computer system.

96. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~24~~66, further comprising the step of:

providing a request package pickup interface via an Internet site, the request package pickup interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including package pickup information fields for customer entry of package pickup information associated with shipment of the package.

97. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of:
providing a shipment summary interface via the Internet site, the shipment summary interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including editable shipment summary, information fields associated with an order to ship a package.

98. (Original) The method of claim 97, wherein the shipment summary interface is operative to display service options for selection by the customer selected from the group comprising: changing information associated with shipment of the package, adding another package to the shipment, selecting to view a drop-off locator, and selecting service for delivery of the package sooner.

99. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of:
providing a payment interface via the Internet site, the payment interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including selectable payment options associated with an order to ship a package.

100. (Original) The method of claim 99, wherein the payment options are selected from the group comprising: payment from a customer's existing account with the shipping

service provider, payment via credit card on file with the shipping service provider, and payment via other credit card.

101. (Withdrawn)

102. (Withdrawn)

103. (Original) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of:
providing a shipping history interface via the Internet site, the shipping history interface being accessible by the customer's Internet accessible computer system and including shipping history information fields for allowing customer selection of shipping history display options.

Q15 104. (Original) The method of claim 103, further comprising the steps of:
displaying shipping history information to the customer in response to selection of a shipping history display option.

105. (Original) The method of claim 103, wherein the shipping history display options include a track shipment option, and further comprising the step of displaying shipment tracking information associated with a selected prior order by the customer in response to selection of the track shipment option.

106. (Withdrawn)

107. (Original) The method of claim 103, wherein the shipping history display options include a "shipment details" option, and further comprising the steps of:
displaying information associated with at least one prior order by the customer, and
displaying detailed information associated with a selected prior order of the customer in response to selection of the shipment details option in association with selection of a particular prior order.

108. (Withdrawn)

109. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2466, further comprising the step of storing preference information associated with the customer in a customer profile information system.

110. (Withdrawn)

111. (Original) A method for shipping a package from a shipping service provider's customer to an intended recipient, comprising the steps of:

receiving a customer-entered order to ship a package from an Internet accessible computer system operated by a customer;

validating shipping information associated with the customer-entered order;

in response to validating the shipping information, communicating printer indicia to the customer at the Internet accessible computer system such that the customer is enabled to print a label for affixation to the package, the label containing predetermined label shipping information;

acquiring the package from the customer;

scanning a label affixed to the package to obtain the label shipping information from the label on the package; and

delivering the package to the intended recipient in accordance with the shipping information entered by the customer and label shipping information obtained from the label affixed to the package.

112. (Original) The method of claim 111, wherein the step of scanning the label is carried out at the point of acquisition of the package.

113. (Original) The method of claim 111, further comprising the step of obtaining a payment from the customer for shipping the package, and wherein the validating step includes validating the payment.

114. (Original) The method of claim 112, wherein the step of receiving the payment from the customer comprises receiving credit card payment information from the customer.

115. (Original) The method of claim 111, further comprising the steps of:
in response to customer selection of an on call pickup option via the Internet
accessible computer system, generating a dispatch order for pick up of the package; and
communicating the dispatch order to a selected service person,
whereby the selected service person, in response to receipt of the dispatch order, picks
up the package for delivery via the shipping service provider to the intended recipient.

116. (Original) The method of claim 115, further comprising the step of receiving
the dispatch order with a communications receiving device used by the selected service
person.

117. (Original) The method of claim 111, wherein the step of acquiring the package
comprises picking up the package at a place selected by the customer.

118. (Original) The method of claim 111, wherein the step of acquiring the package
comprises picking up the package at a drop box.

119. (Original) The method of claim 111, further comprising the step of accepting
information derived from scanning label indicia on the label affixed to the package at on call
pickup or when processed at a drop box.

120. (Original) The method of claim 111, further comprising the step of storing
status information corresponding to the status of shipment of the package and providing the
status information for access by the customer.

121. (Original) The method of claim 120, wherein the status information comprises
tracking information corresponding to the package.

122. through 162. (Withdrawn)

163. (Original) A method for shipping a package from a package sender to an intended recipient via a shipping service provider, the package sender having an Internet-accessible computer system, comprising the steps of:

providing an Internet-accessible shipping computer system (ISS) associated with the shipping service provider, the ISS operative for receiving shipping information from a package sender via the package sender's computer system;

displaying a data entry form on the package sender's computer system for entry of shipping information by the package sender;

receiving shipping information entered by the package sender;

transmitting the shipping information from the package sender's computer system to the ISS via the Internet;

validating predetermined shipping information;

in response to validating the predetermined shipping information, communicating predetermined shipping label information for display on the package sender's computer system and printing of a customized shipping label; and

acquiring the package and associated customized shipping label for introduction into the shipping service provider's package handling system,

whereby the shipping service provider accepts and handles the package with the customized shipping label associated therewith in the same manner as a package having a preprinted shipping label.

164. (Original) The method of claim 163, wherein the shipping information includes information selected from the group comprising: information relating to characteristics of with the package, information corresponding to the package sender, information relating to the intended recipient, information relating to payment for the shipping service, and information relating to a service type.

165. through 167. (Withdrawn)

168. (Original) The method of claim 163, wherein the step of validating predetermined shipping information comprises validating address information of the intended recipient, and wherein a postal code is employed for the address validation.

169. (Original) The method of claim 163, further comprising the step of determining a selected mode of entry of the package into the shipping service provider's package handling system.

170. (Original) The method of claim 169, wherein the step of determining the selected mode of entry of the package into the shipping service provider's package handling system comprises customer selection of package dropoff at a dropoff location.

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171. (Original) The method of claim 169, wherein the step of determining the selected mode of entry of the package into the shipping service provider's package handling system comprises customer selection of on demand pickup.

172. (Original) The method of claim 171, further comprising the step of automatically dispatching a package pickup to the package sender to pick up the package in response to a determination that on demand pickup of the package has been requested by the package sender.

173. (Original) The method of claim 163, further comprising the step of receiving selection of a payment method for shipping the package.

174. (Withdrawn)

175. (Original) The method of claim 173, wherein the payment method comprises payment with a credit card.

176. through 189. (Withdrawn)
